

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Claims 2-11, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. In accordance with the written description requirement, the specification has been amended to support the original claims as filed.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 3-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Applicant has amended claims 3-9 in a manner that it is believed to overcome this rejection.

Claims 2-11, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,235,869 to Roby et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Roby I") in combination with U.S. Patent No. 6,191,236 to Roby et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Roby II"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Nowhere does Roby I teach or suggest a process for manufacturing a monofilament suture made from a block copolymer of about 50 to about 80% glycolide and about 20 to about 50% trimethylene carbonate. Rather, Roby I discloses a process for manufacturing a random polymer of glycolide (about 68-75%), caprolactone (about 12-17%), trimethylene carbonate (about 1-19%) and lactide (about 1-19%) [see col. 2, lines 58-68 to col. 3, lines 1-8 of Roby I]. In fact, Roby I teaches away from block copolymers by differentiating the random polymers of glycolide, caprolactone, trimethylene carbonate and lactide, as exhibiting strength retention, mass loss and modulus similar to gut sutures, unlike other known block copolymers, i.e., Monocryl, Dexon and Vicryl. (see column 1, lines 24-67 and column 2, lines 58-62 of Roby I).

In addition, Roby I fails to teach or suggest a process for manufacturing a monofilament suture made from a block copolymer of about 50 to about 80% glycolide and about 20 to about

50% trimethylene carbonate, wherein the monofilament is drawn through a second oven maintained at a temperature of about 110°C to about 120°C at a draw ratio of about 1.25:1 to about 1.50:1 and a third oven maintained at a temperature of about 120°C to about 140°C at a draw ratio of about 0.7:1 to about 0.8:1. Rather Roby I discloses a process in which the random polymer containing 4 different polymers is drawn through a second oven maintained at 80°C to 100°C at a draw ratio of about 2.5:1 to about 12:1 and a third oven maintained at a temperature of about 90°C to about 110°C at a draw ratio of about 0.85:1 to about 1.05:1. The second and third draws of Roby I are performed at lower temperatures and higher draw ratios than those disclosed in the present application.

Roby II fails to cure the deficiencies of Roby I. Nowhere does Roby II teach or suggest a process for manufacturing a monofilament suture made from a block copolymer of about 50 to about 80% glycolide and about 20 to about 50% trimethylene carbonate. Rather, Roby II discloses a process for manufacturing an AB block copolymer including an A block of glycolide and a B block of 1,3 dioxane-2-one copolymerized with 1,4 dioxan-2-one (see column 2, lines 19-26 of Roby II). Like Roby I, Roby II fails to disclose a process for manufacturing a block copolymer which includes glycolide and trimethylene carbonate, but rather requires the formation of a copolymer which includes at least 3 polymers.

In addition, Roby II fails to teach or suggest a process for manufacturing a monofilament suture made from a block copolymer of about 50 to about 80% glycolide and about 20 to about 50% trimethylene carbonate, wherein the monofilament is drawn through a second oven maintained at a temperature of about 110°C to about 120°C at a draw ratio of about 1.25:1 to about 1.50:1 and a third oven maintained at a temperature of about 120°C to about 140°C at a draw ratio of about 0.7:1 to about 0.8:1. Rather Roby II discloses a process in which the AB

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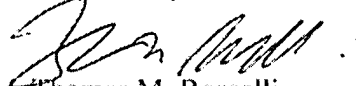
block copolymer containing glycolide and a copolymer of 1,3 dioxane-2-one and 1,4 dioxan-2-one is drawn through a third oven maintained at a temperature of 50°C to 120°C at a draw ratio of 0.96:1 to 0.98:1. Similar to Roby I, the third draw of Roby II is maintained at a lower temperature and higher draw ratios than those disclosed in the present application. Thus, Roby I and Roby II, alone or in any combination, fail to render obvious claims 2-11, 13 and 14.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 2-11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Roby I in combination with Roby II should be withdrawn.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview may facilitate prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone Applicant's undersigned representative at the number indicated above.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the application and allowance of claims 2-11, 13 and 14 is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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